

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. It is a breach of journalistic ethics, and violates the law.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. Calling this documentary "news" is disingenuous; it has one goal and that is to defeat a candidate, not to inform the public.

Unless Sinclair follows up immediately in prime time with the other side depicted in the documentary film, "Up River," which gives the other side, this broadcasting company has no business being sanctioned by the FCC.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.